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POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

into the ranks of the English race itself, so that you have for the first time in history at once a nation and a democracy that is imperial." If the English poets seem to us to lack conviction, it may be because at heart they are better democrats than imperialists.

There is very little of the taint of military imperialism in the 738 poems received in this contest. Instead there is a general disposition to substitute for the retrogressive military ideals of a Bernhardt, a Treitschke, or a Cramb, the divine common sense of Abraham Lincoln. No future historian of the United States will be able to use quotations from her twentieth-century poets in support of an imperial policy of conquest and slaughter.

The American poet may fail, indeed he does not even attempt, to justify the ways of man to God; but he does not fail to realize that it is only through the justification of the ways of man to man that the ways of man may be ultimately justified to God. A. C. H.

REVIEWS

The Sea is Kind, by T. Sturge Moore. Houghton-Mifflin Company.

Mr. T. Sturge Moore has the magic wand, and all he touches turns to gold, or at least to a shimmering silver. Rich lingering syllables, slow phrases full of sound, long recitative clauses with unexpected little turns of melody—these fill his book to the brim with music as rich and delicate as a Debussy pastoral. Like Debussy's, also, it is a new note, a

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modern development, though it is easy enough to trace the poet's ancestry, direct or collateral, through his friend Mr. Yeats, and those remoter friends, Arnold, Keats, Crashaw perhaps, back to the singing Elizabethans, especially Spenser, and the romance poets they hearkened to.

In the lyric dialogue which gives its name to the volume, the nightingale says to Eucritos in a pause of song:

There is a sorcery in well-loved words;
But unintelligible music still
Probes to the buried Titan in the heart,
Whose strength, the vastness of forgotten life,
Suffers but is not dead.

So, in Mr. Moore's poetry, one listens to the word-sorcerer's music with but slighter care for what he is saying. The music itself is full of profound emotion; it expresses spiritual stature and majesty, and keeps the soul alive with longing. Yet, if the mind takes thought, it finds deep meanings clad in proud new raiment; it goes seeking for truth, for the high nameless love beyond love, with a poet who finds these infinite ideas infinitely dear, and who cares comparatively little for lesser loves and sorrows, the staple of most lives. *The Dying Swan* illustrates this loftiness of mood, which one may follow with more detail in many longer poems:

O silver-throated Swan
Struck, struck! a golden dart
Clean through thy breast has gone
Home to thy heart.
Thrill, thrill, O silver throat!
O silver trumpet, pour

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Love for defiance back
On him who smote!
And brim, brim o'er
With love; and ruby-dye thy track,
Down thy last living reach
Of river, sail the golden light—
Enter the sun's heart—even teach,
O wondrous-gifted Pain, teach thou
The God of love, let him learn how!

Lesser subjects are transfigured by this light. Some of the poems for children are as honestly child-like as Stevenson's but they deal more with the spirit of rapture in childhood, even when the subject is as ordinary as *Shoes and Stockings Off* or *Beautiful Meals*:

How nice it is to eat!
All creatures love it so
That they who first did spread,
Ere breaking bread,
A cloth like level snow
Were right, I know.

In *David and Goliath* it is the poet, rather than the child, who half sighs:

It is always good to be
Where long-sighed-for things
Are done with that felicity
Every hero with him brings.

Mr. Moore's poetry is "done with felicity"; in it is the rapture which a true musician strikes out of a noble instrument, and every *opus* is in his own authentic style, although the quality varies. There are delicate surprises in his rhythms, even when he uses a form as sharply defined as the sonnet; but he is more happy in freer rhymed forms.

H. M.